



SmartGate frequently asked questions for US Trusted Travelers

WHAT IS SMARTGATE?

SmartGate gives eligible travelers the option to self-process through passport control on arrival in Australia.

SmartGate uses the data in the ePassport and face recognition technology to perform the customs and immigration checks usually conducted by an Australian Customs and Border Protection officer.

WHO CAN USE SMARTGATE?

To use SmartGate to self-process through Australia's passport control, you must:

- be traveling on a valid US ePassport;
- be flying into Australia; and
- be aged 16 years or older.

DO I HAVE TO APPLY OR REGISTER TO USE SMARTGATE?

No. To use SmartGate, you simply need to hold a valid US ePassport and be aged 16 years or over.

WHERE CAN I USE SMARTGATE?

SmartGate is available at all major Australian international airports including Darwin, Adelaide, Brisbane, Cairns, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney and Gold Coast international airports.

HOW DOES SMARTGATE WORK?

SmartGate is a simple, two-step process involving a kiosk and a gate. The kiosk checks if you are eligible to self-process and the gate performs the identity check and clearance.

Step 1

- Look for the SmartGate kiosk, located in the concourses or at passport control.
- Place your ePassport into the reader and answer standard declarations using the touch screen.
- The kiosk will issue you a SmartGate ticket, which you'll need for step 2.

Step 2

- Insert your SmartGate ticket.
- Look at the camera while your face is compared to your ePassport photo.
- Retrieve your ticket and when the gates open, proceed to the baggage hall.
- Collect your luggage and go to the Customs and Border Protection check-point.
- Hand in your SmartGate ticket and Incoming Passenger Card.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

SmartGate aims to make processing through passport control simpler and more convenient for eligible travelers with ePassports. SmartGate puts the traveler in charge of how they prefer to be processed by giving them the option to bypass the passport processing queues in Australia and self process using their ePassport.

DO I STILL NEED A VISA IF I'M A US CITIZEN?

Yes, you will still need a visa to travel to Australia if you are a US citizen. The SmartGate US Global Entry Trial does not change the visa requirements or the visa process for travel to Australia. For more information about obtaining a visa to enter Australia, visit the Embassy of Australia website.

WHY DIDN'T SMARTGATE WORK FOR ME?

There are a number of reasons why SmartGate might not work. Some of these reasons include:

- You don't have an ePassport
- Your ePassport is damaged
- You moved your head before the camera finished capturing your photo.

Tip: SmartGate's matching process works best if you look as much like your ePassport photo as possible. For example, if you're smiling in your ePassport photo then you should also smile at the gate while SmartGate's camera takes your photo.

IF SMARTGATE DOESN'T WORK FOR ME, WILL I HAVE TO JOIN THE BACK OF THE MANUAL QUEUE?

No. If you cannot complete the process at either the kiosk or the gate, you will be directed to a SmartGate assistance desk to be manually processed by a Customs and Border Protection officer.

WHAT IS THE IDENTITY CHECK AT THE GATE?

The gate checks that your face matches your ePassport photo. It is therefore important that you remain still and look at the camera while your photo is being taken.

WHAT IS FACE RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY?

Face recognition technology works by mapping the underlying bone structure of the face. For example, the distances between eyes, nose, mouth and ears. The measurements are then digitally coded to be used for comparison and verification purposes. With SmartGate, a mathematical formula is used to determine whether the photo of the traveller's face matches their ePassport photo.

WILL SMARTGATE BE QUICKER TO USE?

It will depend on the number of travelers using SmartGate. SmartGate makes passport control a more efficient process in terms of processing the total number of travelers and should result in reduced queue times for many travelers.

WHAT IS AN EPASSPORT?

An ePassport has a microchip embedded in the centre pages and an international ePassport symbol on the front cover. The microchip contains the same personal information that is on the color photo page of the ePassport, including a digitised photograph.



ePassport symbol

HOW DO I GET AN EPASSPORT?

If you are eligible to use SmartGate and you apply for a new passport or renew an expired passport you will be issued with an ePassport. If you have an older passport, without the ePassport symbol on the cover, you will need to wait until your passport is due for renewal, or apply for a new passport before your existing one expires.

WILL MY PASSPORT BE STAMPED?

No. Legislation has been changed so that you no longer need your passport to be stamped if you use SmartGate to cross the border. However, if you wish to obtain a stamp, you can do so by asking a Customs and Border Protection officer.

WHAT IF I HOLD DUAL OR MULTIPLE PASSPORTS?

To use SmartGate, you must use the same passport that you use at check-in overseas so that your details match.

CAN I USE SMARTGATE IF I HAVE A DISABILITY?

Yes. SmartGate is an option for some disabled travelers. Customs and Border Protection is continuing to research options to the extent to which SmartGate can accommodate disabled users.

CAN I WEAR GLASSES OR HEADWEAR?

Prescription glasses can be left on but it is asked that all travelers remove sunglasses or headwear as you would if being processed by a Customs and Border Protection officer. For the face matching process to be effective, it is important that travelers look like their passport photo as much as possible.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I CHANGE MY HAIRSTYLE OR WEIGHT, WILL I HAVE TROUBLE USING SMARTGATE NEXT TIME?

No. SmartGate has been designed to allow for small changes in appearance.

CAN I WEAR PRESCRIPTION GLASSES?

Yes. However, the matching process works best if you look as much like your ePassport photo as possible.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I PASS THROUGH SMARTGATE?

As a SmartGate user, you are still subject to all existing customs, immigration and quarantine requirements. You will need to present a completed Incoming Passenger Card and your SmartGate ticket to a Customs and Border Protection officer in the arrivals hall once you have collected your luggage. You must continue to declare any goods subject to government prohibitions or restrictions.

DO I STILL NEED MY INCOMING PASSENGER CARD?

Yes. You will need to hand your completed Incoming Passenger Card and SmartGate ticket to a Customs and Border Protection officer after you have collected your luggage.

WHAT IS THE SMARTGATE TICKET?

The SmartGate ticket is evidence that you have used SmartGate to cross the border. You will need to retain this ticket and present it with your completed Incoming Passenger Card to a Customs and Border Protection officer after you have collected your luggage.

WHAT IF I HAVE AN EPASSPORT AND MY FRIEND DOESN'T, DO WE HAVE TO SEPARATE TO CLEAR PASSPORT CONTROL?

Your friend will not be able to use SmartGate. If you want to stay together, you will need to join the manual processing queue.

WHAT IF I'M TRAVELING WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE, CAN I USE SMARTGATE?

Yes. However, if you are traveling with children under the age of 16 years, Customs and Border Protection prefers you to be processed together manually.

WHERE CAN I OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT SMARTGATE?

You can email information@customs.gov.au or ring the Customs Information and Support Centre on 1300 363 263.